3:Stone E-5 (1945) 1949
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Boruca

SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION

savannas, and the Indians complain bitterly because many of these fields are being lost to nature, who is reclaiming her own. 311

Property and Inheritance. The oldest male member of the family distributes the property at the death of an individual. If the male members are too young, then the oldest female member does the dividing. Concerning the property, we may judge the economy of the tribe as a whole, more or less clearly from the situation in Boruca, the largest single community of these people. 428

Cattle is a rich man's privilege in Boruca. Amongst the three hundred and twenty-four inhabitants, there are only one hundred cows. These are owned by sixteen individuals, no man having more than six. There are forty-seven houses in the town, however, and there is an ox for the majority of the households, at least one or more pigs, and numerous chickens. In addition to this, there are four bulls, each one with a separate owner, and twenty horses divided amongst six people. The pigs are raised to sell to the *ladinos* and to eat. The cows are seldom killed, but are used as a medium of wealth, to sell, or to pass on as an inheritance. The cows are seldom milked. 231 [556] [439] [556] 234]

Social Organization. A few vestiges of an older communal relationship are seen in the former lack of individual farms, and today, in the *juntas* or "get-togethers" of the Indians. When a new house is to be built, the man who wants to erect it calls upon his friends for help, after he has collected the necessary material. They all join together, and the construction is ready in a short space of time, the owner giving chicha, and often food to the helpers. It is interesting to note also that on one day a year, designated now by the police chief, but formerly by the council, the men gather to cut the grass and to "clean" the village of Boruca. They go systematically from house to house, and cut all the weeds in sight. This helps to maintain Boruca as a cleared, sanitary spot. 476 [342] [364]

Political Organization. Most traces of political organization have disappeared. The outstanding authority is the police agent, who is an Indian, but is appointed by the Government of Costa Rica. He is, however, de- 625 625 623